**27 February 2017**

**Brief on the Department of Basic Education Incremental Introduction of African Languages Report**

1. **Introduction**

The Department of Basic Education adopted the promotion of Multilingualism as an important tool for social cohesion, and for individual and social development.[[1]](#footnote-1) It must further be noted that Poor learning outcomes in South Africa are to a great extent a result of poor language proficiency and utility. This is attested by ANA, PIRLS, TIMSS, SAQMEC and the NSC results on various occasions. The Department noted that very little or nothing was previously done until the introduction of the policy.

The following serve as the objectives of the policy:[[2]](#footnote-2)

* Improve proficiency in and utility of African languages at Home Language level, so that learners are able to use their home language proficiently;
* Increase access to languages by all learners, beyond English and Afrikaans, by requiring all non-African Home Language Speakers to learn an African language; and
* Promote social cohesion and economic empowerment and expand opportunities for the development of African Languages as a significant way of preserving heritage and cultures.

The brief seeks to analyse the report by the Department of Basic Education to the extent of assessing the extent to which the objectives of the policy are realised.

1. **Analysis of the DBE Report**

Table 1: Number of Schools implementing the IIAL Policy[[3]](#footnote-3)

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| **Province** | **2016 IIAL Schools** | **Languages** | **Teachers** | **Classes** | **Learners** |
| **Eastern Cape** | 134 | IsiXhosa and Sesotho | 134 | 1506 | 22945 |
| **Free State** | 93 | Sesotho, IsiXhosa, IsiZulu and Setswana | 93 | 474 | 11689 |
| **Gauteng** | 198 | IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, Setswana, Sesotho, Sepedi, and Xitsonga  | 818 | 1788 | 74511 |
| **KwaZulu-Natal** | 309 | IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, Sesotho | 309 | 1211 | 20126 |
| **Limpopo** | 51 | Sepedi, Setswana, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga | 51 | 359 | 14358 |
| **Mpumalanga** | 4 | SiSwati, IsiZulu, IsiNdebele | 4 | 9 | 360 |
| **North West** | 35 | Setswana, IsiXhosa and IsiZulu  | 35 | 372 | 8007 |
| **Northern Cape** | 8 | Setswana and IsiXhosa | 8 | 435 | 17381 |
| **Western Cape** | 10 | IsiXhosa | 10 | 33 | 1320 |
| **Total** | **842** |  | **1462** | 6187 | 170697 |

Sourced from the DBE 2017 IIAL Report and Modified

* The table reflect that more still needs to be done given the national figure (842 schools);
* The Northern Cape seems to be participating well (17 381 learners benefiting) given that it is a small province compared to all the other nine provinces;
* Mpumalanga is the lowest participating province with only 4 schools participating;

**Suggested questions**:

* What is the DBE doing to encourage all provinces to participate as expected?
* Are there financial implications involved when the policy is implemented?
	1. **How the Department supported provinces?**
* Second Additional Language CAPS material were printed and delivered to all schools implementing the policy;[[4]](#footnote-4)
* Foundation Phase Second Additional Language Tool Kit was distributed to all schools involved;[[5]](#footnote-5)
	+ Exemplar assessment tasks are included in the Lesson Plans, which are part of the IIAL SAL Toolkit.
* Provinces, depending on their contexts, use different models which include the use of: new appointments; teachers in addition; retired teachers; teachers from existing staff establishment; and itinerant teachers.
* All 842 schools currently implementing IIAL have teachers:[[6]](#footnote-6)
	+ GP is using IIAL teachers for the 12 pilot schools and teachers from existing staff establishment for the rest of the implementing schools;
	+ KZN and EC are using educators declared in addition;
	+ NC, NW, FS and KZN appointed IIAL teachers;
	+ WC is utilising itinerant teachers;
	+ In 2014 and 2015 MP used retired teachers, student teachers and SGB appointments. Due to budgetary constraints, only 4 out of 41 schools managed to sustain IIAL implementation in 2016.
* The DBE is conducting monitoring support to all implementing schools.
* The DBE is projecting to have implementation phased in as follows:[[7]](#footnote-7)
	+ 25 percent by the end of 2016/17 financial year;
	+ 50 per cent by the end of 2017/18 financial year;
	+ 75 per cent by the end of 2018/19 financial year; and
	+ 100 per cent by the end of the 2019/20 financial year.

**Suggested Questions:**

* How realistic are the targets set?
* What inform the targets set? Is it the manner the DBE is able to implement or is it the manner schools are prepared?

**2.2 Challenges reported[[8]](#footnote-8)**

* Is remains difficult to find qualified teachers to undertake the project;
* There is still prevailing negative attitude towards African Languages;
* The distance between schools; and
* Budgetary constraint due to other competing priorities.

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| **Matters for Consideration*** The introduction of the policy by the DBE was a step in the right direction towards the implementation of the Constitution;
* The fact that the country emerges from a system that alienated and disjointed society, cannot easily result in smooth implementation of the policy;
* The DBE is expected to implement with understanding that there are many factors at play, and some may seek multi-disciplinary approach.

**Suggested Questions:** * How far is the DBE in ensuring that Sports is used as means for social cohesion?
* How is the DBE able to measure the effectiveness of the implementation of the policy if learners are not subjected to exam that influence progression?
* How are Learners motivated to take the subjects serious?
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1. **Reference**
* Department of Basic Education, (2013). *IIAL Policy*. Pretoria.
* Department of Basic Education, (2017). *Report on the Incremental Introduction of African Languages Policy.* Pretoria.
1. DBE (2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Ibid* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. DBE (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. DBE (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Ibid* [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Ibid* [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *Ibid* [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. DBE (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)